



APRIL 2014

FY 2014, , SEVENTH EDITION

THE 4 RULES OF FIREARMS SAFETY

Preventing Negligent Discharges and Unsafe Gun Handling



Sadly, in the month of March, a child of South Dakota was killed due to the mishandling of a firearm by another child. Like words spoken in anger, bullets cannot be taken back once sent. So it is up to the responsible firearm owner and handler to ensure no round leaves the barrel that was not intended.

Many people will call this an “accidental discharge”, however there is strong evidence that states accidental discharges are a myth. If a firearm is discharged without purpose or control, it is negligent.

The debate of gun ownership and the second amendment is one not to be held in this forum, but the responsible firearm owner understands the basic principles of firearms safety.

Just like on the range, the basic rules apply at home as well as on the firing line:

1. Treat every weapon as if it were loaded. Every weapon is loaded until proven otherwise.
2. The trigger finger

must never enter the trigger guard until you are on target and prepared to fire.

3. Never allow the muzzle of the weapon to cover anything you are not willing/prepared to destroy.
4. Always be sure of your target and what is beyond (back ground)

Finally, remember that ignorance is the first step towards negligence. If we train as we fight, teach others to do the same, and we continually emphasize the importance to those around us, we may prevent an injury or death.

And finally, ensure firearms are away from curious hands. If you have children and firearms in the home, education and responsible security should be your number one priority when it comes to gun ownership.

There are many that believe a firearm in the home that has children should be criminal, while others believe that as soon as a child is able to hold a firearm, start teaching them to shoot. Others may find comfort between the two

extreme examples. The main point is education and responsible ownership must be exercised and supervised. When teaching our kids to drive, we should not hand them the keys and tell them to go figure it out and send them out on the streets on a busy school day during a snow storm. We can all see this disaster unfolding as we speak.

Don't set anyone up for failure by not educating them.

Finally, please remember that alcohol and firearms are a fatal mix. Both activities can be enjoyed, responsibly but separately. Don't even clean a weapon with a beer or two, or any other alcoholic beverage. As Soldiers, you would think we should not have to say it. However, accident reports from around the country tell us otherwise.



GUN SAFETY
Your doing it wrong

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Texting and Driving; Its illegal and unsafe, get the message !

In March of 2014, Gov Dennis Daugaard signed into law a ban on texting and driving in South Dakota. The new law is a secondary offense meaning that a law enforcement officer may not stop you for that offense only, but if caught violating other traffic laws, while texting, it will cost an extra \$100.00. Executive Order 13513 was signed in October of 2009 banning all texting while operating a government vehicle. These calls to stop texting and driving are a result of the tens of thousands of accidents injuring and killing Americans. These are the people we as Soldiers, have sworn to protect. So how does it serve anyone's interest to violate these laws and the rules of common sense.

Common sense should tell us that as we drive, anytime not focused on driving, is added time to stopping distances. Even in a slow residential area, at 20 MPH or less, distance traveled from the time a risk appears to a complete stop can be nearly 50 ft. If you add a distraction of .5 seconds, that can add at least 14 ft to total stopping distance. This may not sound like much, but measure the distance from your rear tires forward. That 14 feet may be the difference of stopping before striking a child,

or that child under the rear tires.

Now imagine that stopping distance at freeway speeds: 75 mph. Distracted a driver will travel in excess of 400 feet to stop a vehicle. This factor is greatly altered by the size and condition of the vehicle and the braking system/tires. If no in optimum condition, that number will go even higher. That may not seem like a lot to some, but if you or your family encounter a significant obstruction on the road that is 300 feet away, and you are looking at a cell phone, that obstacle could be your families undoing.

Not to mention that when we text, call or otherwise distract ourselves from driving, all too often the vehicle will drift left or right. That will either cause impact into a vehicle on the side of us, move into oncoming lanes or off the road and potentially roll over.

Many myths exist and flutter around drivers that text and drive. "I can multi task", "Its safe to do if you only text one or two words at a time" or "reading a text is different than writing one". These are all examples of excuses used when confronted by law enforcement during accident investigations.

Across our nation, too many people have already died as a result of distracted driving. It is up to each of us to protect ourselves and our families by not driving distracted. Also, we must be vigilant and observant to beware of those around us that may not be focused on their driving. If you encounter a driver who is either intoxicated, distracted or otherwise unable to maintain the road, get away from those drivers. The best place for any reckless driver is in front of you. That way you can control the space and distance between you.

Cell phone use is not the only distraction that can cause an accident: eating, drinking, conversations, map reading, GPS use and day dreaming are all causes of distraction that have been cited as the primary distraction in an accident.

If you stay defensive and stay alert, it will help you stay alive. If traveling less than 2 hours, let the distraction wait, if traveling more that two hours, you needed to take a break anyways.



It may only be a second of a distraction, but timed right, that second may cost someone a life time.



FEELIN' TEXTY?

**HIDE THE TEMPTATION
BEFORE DRIVING!
PUT THAT PHONE
OUTTA SIGHT!**

At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cellphones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. In 2012 alone, 3,328 people died on U.S. roadways in distracted driving crashes, and an estimated 421,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR
BATTLE BUDDIES!**



**Practice
Safe
Text!**



The signs are all around.
It's up to YOU to recognize
and act on them.

**Training, Discipline
and Standards**

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.

KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT
**know the
signs**
DO WHAT'S RIGHT

